



J. TYLER McCAULEY  
AUDITOR-CONTROLLER

**COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES  
DEPARTMENT OF AUDITOR-CONTROLLER**

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September 21, 2005

TO: Supervisor Gloria Molina, Chair  
Supervisor Yvonne B. Burke  
Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky  
Supervisor Don Knabe  
Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich

FROM: J. Tyler McCauley   
Auditor-Controller

SUBJECT: **FAMILIES FOR CHILDREN FOSTER FAMILY AGENCY CONTRACT  
REVIEW**

We have completed a contract compliance review of Families for Children Foster Family Agency (Families for Children or Agency), a Foster Family Agency (FFA) service provider. The review was conducted by the Auditor-Controller's Countywide Contract Monitoring Division.

**Background**

The Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) contracts with Families for Children, a private, non-profit, community-based organization to recruit, train, and certify foster care parents for the supervision of children placed in foster care by DCFS. Once the Agency places a child, it is required to monitor the placement until the child is discharged from the program.

Families for Children is required to hire qualified social workers to provide case management and act as a liaison between DCFS and foster parents. Families for Children oversees a total of 21 certified foster homes in which 36 DCFS children were placed. Families for Children is located in the Second District.

DCFS pays Families for Children a negotiated monthly rate, per child placement, established by the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) Funding and Rate Bureau. Based on the child's age, Families for Children receives between \$1,589 and \$1,865 per month, per child. Out of these amounts, the Agency pays the foster parents

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between \$624 and \$790 per month, per child. For Fiscal Year 2004-05, DCFS paid Families for Children approximately \$761,000.

### **Purpose/Methodology**

The purpose of the review was to determine whether Families for Children was providing the services outlined in their Program Statement and County contract. We also evaluated Families for Children's ability to achieve planned staffing levels. Our monitoring visit included verifying whether Families for Children received the appropriate reimbursement rate for each child and whether the certified foster parents received their portion of the reimbursement rate in a timely manner. We reviewed certified foster parent files, children's case files, personnel files, and interviewed Families for Children staff, the children and the foster parents. We also visited a sample of certified foster homes.

### **Results of Review**

Overall, Families for Children provided the services required by the County contract. The foster parents stated that the services they received from the Agency met their expectations and the children indicated that they enjoy living with their foster parents. Families for Children also maintained appropriate staffing levels and their caseloads did not exceed the maximum allowed by CDSS Title 22 regulations.

Families for Children needs to improve their oversight of the foster homes to ensure the homes comply with the provisions of Title 22 and the County contract. For example, for one home we visited, the foster parents did not store kitchen toxins and detergents in a secured location, maintain an operable smoke detector, post a written emergency plan and did not conduct emergency drills with the children. In addition, the Needs and Services plans for three (60%) of the five children reviewed did not contain all information required by the County contract and Title 22 regulations.

We recommend that Families for Children ensure foster homes and Agency staff comply with the County contract requirements and Title 22 regulations. The details of our review, along with recommendations for corrective action, are attached.

### **Review of Report**

On August 11, 2005, we discussed our report with Families for Children who agreed with the findings. In their attached response, Families for Children management indicates the actions they have taken to implement the recommendations contained in the report. We also notified DCFS of the results of our review.

We thank Families for Children for their cooperation and assistance during this review. Please call me if you have any questions, or your staff may contact Don Chadwick at (626) 293-1102.

JTM:MMO:DC

Attachment

c: David E. Janssen, Chief Administrative Officer  
Dr. David Sanders, Director, Department of Children and Family Services  
Andrew Henderson, Director, Families for Children Foster Family Agency  
Colleen Anderson, Community Care Licensing  
Public Information Office  
Audit Committee

**COUNTYWIDE CONTRACT MONITORING DIVISION  
FOSTER FAMILY AGENCY PROGRAM  
FISCAL YEAR 2005-2006  
FAMILIES FOR CHILDREN FOSTER FAMILY AGENCY**

**PROGRAM SERVICES**

**Objective**

To determine whether Families for Children Foster Family Agency (Families for Children or Agency) provided program services in accordance with their County contract and California Department of Social Services (CDSS) Title 22 Regulations.

**Verification**

We visited three of the 21 Los Angeles County certified foster homes that the Agency billed the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) for in August and September 2004 and interviewed the four foster parents and five children placed in the three homes. We also reviewed the documentation in the case files for five children. In addition, we reviewed the Agency's monitoring activities.

**Results**

Generally, Families for Children provided the services outlined in the County contract. The foster parents stated that the services they received from the Agency meet their expectations and the children indicated that they enjoy living with their foster parents. The foster homes were well maintained, clean and generally in compliance with the County contract and Title 22 requirements. In addition, Families for Children provided Comprehensive Quarterly Reports to DCFS in a timely manner.

Although Families for Children provided most of the services required by the County contract, the Agency needs to improve their oversight of the foster homes to ensure that the homes are complying with all the provisions of Title 22 regulations and the County contract. In addition, the Agency needs to ensure that the Needs and Services plans in children's case files contain all information required by the County contract and Title 22 regulations. We specifically noted the following:

**Foster Home Visitations**

- For one (33%) of the three foster homes visited, the foster parent did not store kitchen toxins and detergents in a secure location. The home also did not have an operable smoke detector in its main bedroom hallway. Additionally, the foster parents did not post a written emergency plan or conduct emergency drills with the children. The County contract and Title 22 regulations require that foster homes secure toxins and detergents, have operable smoke detectors in its bedroom

hallways, have a written emergency plan and practice emergency procedures every six months. Subsequent to our review, the Agency provided a receipt for locks to secure the toxins and detergents and a new smoke detector.

- For one (33%) of the three foster homes visited, the foster parents did not have an upstairs emergency escape plan as required by the County contract. Subsequent to our review, the Agency provided a receipt for an upstairs escape ladder.

### **Reporting Requirements**

- For three (60%) of five children's case files reviewed, the Needs and Services Plans did not contain information regarding visits by the child's family as required by the County contract. In addition, two of the three Needs and Services Plans also did not contain information on personal care and grooming and the child's ability to manage his/her own money as required by the County contract.

We recommend that Families for Children ensures that staff adequately monitor foster homes to ensure the homes comply with the County contract requirements and Title 22 regulations. In addition, we recommend that Families for Children ensure that the Needs and Services Plans include all information required by the County contract and Title 22 regulations.

### **Recommendations**

#### **Families for Children management:**

1. **Ensure that staff adequately monitor foster homes to ensure the homes comply with the County contract requirements and Title 22 regulations.**
2. **Ensure that the Needs and Services Plans include all information required by the County contract and Title 22 regulations.**

### **CLIENT VERIFICATION**

#### **Objective**

To determine whether the program participants actually received the services that Families for Children billed DCFS.

#### **Verification**

We interviewed five children placed in three certified foster homes and three foster parents to confirm the services Families for Children billed to DCFS.

**Results**

The program participants interviewed stated that the services they received from Families for Children met their expectations and their assigned social worker visited them regularly.

**Recommendation**

There are no recommendations for this section.

**STAFFING/CASELOAD LEVELS****Objective**

Determine whether Families for Children social workers' case loads do not exceed 15 placements and whether the supervising social worker does not supervise more than six social workers, as required by the County contract and CDSS Title 22 regulations.

**Verification**

We interviewed Families for Children administrator and supervising social worker. We also reviewed case load statistics and payroll records for August and September 2004.

**Results**

Families for Children's two full-time social workers maintained an average caseload of 15 cases and four part-time social workers maintained an average caseload of four cases. In addition, the supervising social worker supervised six social workers.

**Recommendation**

There are no recommendations for this section.

**STAFFING QUALIFICATIONS****Objective**

Determine whether Families for Children's staff meets the education and work experience qualifications required by their County contract and CDSS Title 22 regulations. In addition, determine whether Families for Children conducted hiring clearances prior to hiring their staff and provided ongoing training to staff.

**Verification**

We interviewed Families for Children's administrator and supervising social worker. In addition, we reviewed each staff's personnel file for documentation to confirm their education and work experience qualifications, hiring clearances and ongoing training.

**Results**

Families for Children's administrator, supervising social worker and social workers possess the required education and work experience required by the County contract and Title 22 regulations. In addition, Families for Children appropriately conducted hiring clearances and provided ongoing training to staff assigned to the County contract.

**Recommendation**

**There are no recommendations for this section.**

Families for Children, Inc., A Foster/Adopt Services Agency



To: Supervisor Gloria Molina, Chair  
Supervisor Yvonne B. Burke  
Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky  
Supervisor Don Knabe  
Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich

From: Families for Children, Inc.  
A Foster Family Treatment Agency

Subject: **FAMILIES FOR CHILDREN FOSTER FAMILY AGENCY CONTRACT REVIEW**

Families for Children, Inc. underwent a contract compliance review. the review was conducted by the Auditor-Controller's Countywide Contract Monitoring Division.

As a result of the review, two recommendations were made.

1. **Recommendation:**

Ensure that staff adequately monitors foster homes to ensure the homes comply with the county contract requirements and Title 22 regulations

**Correction:**

County and State certified home requirements will be reviewed in all agency training that agency social workers receive. Families For Children will require agency social workers to complete Quarterly quality assurance visits to all homes to ensure Title 22 and county contract compliance.

2. **Recommendation:** Ensure that Needs and Services Plans include all information required by the county contract and Title 22 regulations.

**Correction:**

Families For Children was utilizing the State Community Care Licensing Appraisal Needs and Services Plan form. All required plans and signatures were in the files. Families for Children will revise the format to include additional information required by the County Contract, such as documenting visits by birth parents, information on care and grooming and the child's ability to manage his/her own money.


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**Families for Children, Inc., A Foster/Adopt Services Agency**

Families for Children appreciated the professionalism and efficiency which Brian Henricks, CIA and Cassandra Youngblood, Auditor, demonstrated during this review.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "T. Henderson, Ph.D.", written over a horizontal line.

Terilyn Jones Henderson, Ph.D.  
Administrator

cc: Brian Henricks, CIA  
Cassandra Youngblood, Auditor

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